

## Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 NSC-05 NSCE-00 IO-03 SSO-00

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O 080500Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9666

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 4172

LIMDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINS MILI CB

SUBJECT: ESTIMATE OF GKR SURVIVABILITY

REF: A. STATE 051386

B. PHNOM PENH 4171

1. WITH SUFFICIENT ADDITIONAL MILITARY AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, THE GKR HAS A CHANCE OF GETTING THROUGH THE DRY SEASON. WITHOUT THIS ADDITIONAL MONEY, IT CERTAINLY WILL NOT. I MADE THIS POINT VIGOROUSLY WITH ALL LEGISLATORS WHO HAVE VISITED PHNOM PENH DURING THE LAST WEEK.

2. THE CHANCE OF THE GKR GETTING THROUGH THE DRY SEASON ALSO REQUIRED THE GKR TO RECRUIT REPLACEMENTS TO MAKE UP FOR THEIR HEAVY LOSSES AND FIND WAYS OF REDUCING DESERTIONS AND PREVENTING NEW RECRUITS GOING AWOL. WHILE THE GKR HAS IMPROVED ITS EFFORTS TO FIND RECRUITS, THE NATION CLEARLY IS NOT ON A TOTAL WAR FOOTING DESPITE OUR URGINGS TOWARD THAT END.

3. AS LONG AS POCHENTONG AIRPORT REMAINS OPEN TO TRAFFIC AND SUPPLIES CAN BE BROUGHT IN, THE GKR HAS A CHANCE TO SURVIVE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE FANK IS  
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TRYING TO DISLODGE THE ENEMY FROM THE AREAS FROM WHERE

ROCKETS ARE FIRED AT THE AIRPORT; HOWEVER, PROGRESS HAS BEEN SLOW. SIMULTANEOUSLY, THE ENEMY IS PUSHING ON THE NORTHERN FRONT OF PHNOM PENH, THEREBY FORCING FANK TO DIVERT SOME RESOURCES FROM THE ROCKET BELT AREA TO FACE THIS ADDITIONAL THREAT. THE LOSS OF THE LAST POSITION (SIERRA 2) BETWEEN NEAK LUONG ON THE MEKONG AND THE VIETNAMESE BORDER HAS POSTPONED THE EARLY OPENING OF THE MEKONG AND MAY FREE SOME ENEMY FORCES WHICH COULD BE HURLED AGAINST THE SOUTHERN PERIMETER OF PHNOM PENH. IF THIS WERE TO OCCUR, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT THREAT TO COUNTER, SINCE FANK HAS NO ADDITIONAL RESERVES IN THE CAPITAL OR IN THE PROVINCES TO SEND TO THE SOUTHERN FRONT.

4. DESPITE ALL THESE "IFS", WITH ADDITIONAL MILITARY AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE THE GKR STANDS A CHANCE TO GET THROUGH THE DRY SEASON, ALTHOUGH SERIOUSLY WEAKENED. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE ENEMY HAS ALSO BEEN SERIOUSLY WEAKENED AND PERHAPS MORE SO THAN THE GKR, WHICH MIGHT MAKE THE ADVERSARY MORE AMENABLE TO ACCEPTING A POLITICAL SOLUTION LATER THIS YEAR RATHER THAN CONTINUING HIS EFFORTS TO IMPOSE HIS WILL BY FORCE. HOWEVER, THE KC ARE SHOWING DURING THE DRY SEASON CONTINUED DETERMINATION TO PRESS THEIR MILITARY MOMENTUM AND THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE. UNDOUBTEDLY THE KC ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE PUBLIC DEBATE IN THE U.S. WHICH CASTS DOUBT ON THE PROSPECT OF CONTINUED AMERICAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE GKR.

5. MY LONG TERM ASSESSMENT AS TO THE PROSPECTS OF THE GKR HAS NOT CHANGED FROM WHAT THIS MISSION HAS CONSISTENTLY REPORTED DURING THE PAST YEAR: THAT TIME IN THE LONG RUN IS NOT ON THE SIDE OF THE GKR. I FULLY AGREE THAT UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO FIND A POLITICAL SOLUTION. HOWEVER, ONCE THE DRY SEASON HAS COME TO AN END AND THE GKR EMERGES INTACT, THE WET SEASON MUST BE USED TO FIND A NON-MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT.  
DEAN

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## Message Attributes

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